



**RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER**

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## STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

**PRESENTED:** December 19, 2023 **REPORT:** 23-125  
**FROM:** Planning - Development **FILE:** 4320-30-1396  
**SUBJECT:** WHISTLER PRIDE – TEMPORARY CHANGE TO HOURS OF LIQUOR SERVICE

### RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**That** the recommendation of the General Manager of Climate Action, Planning and Development Services be endorsed.

### RECOMMENDATION

**That** Council authorize hours of liquor sales to extend to 4:00 a.m. for the Whistler Pride Snowball Dance being held at the Whistler Conference Centre on Saturday, January 27-28, 2024.

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide a recommendation for Council's consideration regarding an application from the Whistler Resort Association, known as Tourism Whistler (TW) for an extension of hours of liquor sales to 4:00 a.m. for the Whistler Pride and Ski Festival's Snowball Dance at the Whistler Conference Centre on January 27-28, 2024.

Information Report  Administrative Report (Decision or Direction)

### DISCUSSION

#### **Background**

The Whistler Conference Centre (Conference Centre) annually hosts the Whistler Pride Snowball Dance (Snowball Dance), as part of the annual Whistler Pride and Ski Festival (Whistler Pride). This event historically has been approved for extended hours each year from 2009-2019 and 2023 with hours of liquor service to 4:00 a.m. These extended hours of service require municipal and provincial approval consistent with the municipality's bylaws and policies for liquor licensing.

TW holds a liquor primary licence (No. 106769) at the Conference Centre, and has applied for a temporary extension of hours of liquor service for the Snowball Dance, to be held on Saturday, January 27 until 4:00 a.m. on Sunday, January 28, 2024. Under the license, the permitted hours of liquor sales are from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 a.m., Monday through Saturday and 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. on Sunday.

## **Analysis**

The Snowball Dance will have approximately 1,200 guests, and is the final event of the January 21-28, 2024 Whistler Pride. TW's application states that the Snowball Dance brings an additional 1,000 plus room nights to the resort over and above the week-long festival events. The applicant's event information, attached as Appendix A, describes the benefits of the proposed extension of hours and the measures proposed to manage potential negative impacts.

The proposal addresses measures to mitigate potential negative impacts. These measures are supported by staff and are summarized as follows:

- Noise from the event itself will be substantially confined to the Conference Centre and is not expected to be objectionable outside of the building;
- Attendees will be advised by posters at the exit doors and in the washrooms to be respectful of accommodation units and other guests staying in the Village;
- Exiting attendees will be reminded by the DJ at closing, as well as event and security staff to leave the venue quietly and to be respectful of other resort guests;
- Event organizers will communicate with taxi companies to be available as needed to pick up guests leaving the event;
- With the late closing time, attendees tend to leave the event throughout the evening instead of all at the same time. Many event attendees stay at nearby hotels and disperse quickly and quietly after the event;
- Host hotels (Aava and Crystal Lodge) are in close proximity to the venue for a short walk back to accommodations;
- Event attendees from past events have been found to be respectful of the Whistler community and each other; and
- Patrons leaving after 3:00 a.m. will not likely interact with those leaving nightclubs, which end liquor service at 2:00 a.m.

The Snowball Dance has been conducted in past years without problems, and the 4:00 a.m. closing of liquor sale has the support of the Whistler RCMP detachment.

The proposed measures are expected to mitigate the potential for noise and disturbance from patrons leaving the event. Council has previously authorized 4:00 a.m. closing times at the Conference Centre for Whistler Pride events (2009-2019 and 2023) and for World Ski and Snowboard Festival events (2008-2019), and there were no negative impacts on the community.

## **Current Good Standing Status**

*Council Policy G-17: Municipal Liquor Licensing Policy* (Liquor Licensing Policy) requires that any establishment applying for a temporary liquor license change to be in Good Standing with respect to compliance and enforcement history of the establishment. This application was referred to the Whistler Detachment of the RCMP, Whistler Fire Rescue Services (WFRS), and the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) Building and Bylaw Departments. The applicant is in Good Standing with no outstanding issues.

## Zoning Analysis

The Conference Centre lands are zoned Commercial Core One (CC1). The CC1 Zone permits establishments licenced for the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages on the premises including: hotel, club, recreational centre, restaurant, cabaret, neighbourhood public house, lounge, concert hall, sports stadium and municipally owned cultural centre. The proposal is compliant with all other land use regulations.

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## POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

### Relevant Council Authority/Previous Decisions

The Liquor Licensing Policy requires Council consideration and approval for a temporary change to a liquor primary licence for hours of liquor service past 2:00 a.m. The policy further supports a Whistler Pride single weekend event at the Whistler Conference Centre with a 4:00 a.m. closing time for liquor service subject to annual review, Council approval, plans approved by the municipality for the mitigation of potential negative impacts, and the Conference Centre being in Good Standing.

### 2023-2026 Strategic Plan

The 2023-2026 Strategic Plan outlines the high-level direction of the RMOW to help shape community progress during this term of Council. The Strategic Plan contains four priority areas with various associated initiatives that support them. This section identifies how this report links to the Strategic Plan.

#### Strategic Priorities

Housing

*Expedite the delivery of and longer-term planning for employee housing*

Climate Action

*Mobilize municipal resources toward the implementation of the Big Moves Climate Action Plan*

Community Engagement

*Strive to connect locals to each other and to the RMOW*

Smart Tourism

*Preserve and protect Whistler's unique culture, natural assets and infrastructure*

Not Applicable

*Aligns with core municipal work that falls outside the strategic priorities but improves, maintains, updates and/or protects existing and essential community infrastructure or programs*

### Community Vision and Official Community Plan

The Official Community Plan (OCP) is the RMOW's most important guiding document that sets the community vision and long-term community direction. This section identifies how this report applies to the OCP.

The recommended resolution included within this report aligns with the following economic viability and land use and development policies of the OCP:

- Support increased cultural, education and learning, arts, entertainment, events, sport tourism, and health and wellness opportunities that diversify our tourism-based economy using existing infrastructure.
- Manage liquor licensing to support a wide variety of food and beverage offerings and maintain a safe and friendly atmosphere. Work with relevant agencies and stakeholders to reduce negative impacts of liquor-related issues associated with late-night entertainment uses.

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## BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

There are no budget considerations. The municipal application fee for a temporary change to an existing licence is structured to cover staff costs for processing the application.

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## LÍL'WAT NATION & SQUAMISH NATION CONSIDERATIONS

The RMOW is committed to working with the Líl'wat People, known in their language as *L'il'wat7úl* and the Squamish People, known in their language as the *Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw* to: create an enduring relationship; establish collaborative processes for Crown land planning; achieve mutual objectives; and enable participation in Whistler's resort economy.

There are no specific considerations to include in this report.

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## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Level of community engagement commitment for this project:

Inform     Consult     Involve     Collaborate     Empower

Comment(s):

In accordance with the Liquor Licensing Policy, the application was referred to the Municipal Liquor Licensing Advisory Committee for their individual comments. No concerns were expressed.

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## REFERENCES

Appendix A – Whistler Conference Centre 2023 Snowball Dance Event Information

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## SUMMARY

This report presents an application from TW for a temporary extension of hours of liquor sale until 4:00 a.m. on Sunday, January 28, 2024 for the Snowball Dance, the final event of the Whistler Pride scheduled for the night of Saturday, January 27th. Staff recommend that Council approve the extension of hours of liquor sales for this event.

**SIGN-OFFS**

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